

**A Worthy Deed.** Mr Henry W. Merriam performed a worthy deed on last Christmas morning. We venture to say that if employers would be as generous to their employees as this man there would be a much better feeling between them, and capital and labor be brought much closer together. The following dispatch appeared in the papers on Christmas morning:

When the employees of the Merriam shoe factory called at the office for their week's wages this afternoon, they were surprised, but agreeably so, to hear that their employer, Henry W. Merriam, had ordered the sum of \$6,500 to be distributed among them as a Christmas gift. The factory employs about four hundred hands and all were remembered, from the oldest to the youngest. Miles Atwood, an old employee of the factory, met with financial reverses several years ago, and was compelled to mortgage his house to Mr. Merriam for a considerable amount of money. To-day the mortgage was handed to him, together with his share of the money distributed, although there was several hundred dollars due on it.

**A Short Sermon.** The story is told that Dr. Spurgeon used to practice his students in extempore preaching from a text disclosed only in the pulpit, and that one of his young men, on reaching the desk and opening the note containing his text, read the single word "Zaccheus." He thought for a minute or two, and then delivered himself thus: "Zaccheus was a little man, so am I; Zaccheus was up a tree, so am I; Zaccheus made haste and came down, and so do I." He suited the action to the word.

**Fond of Trouble.** It is said that most of our trouble is borrowed trouble. It is one of the things that is easily borrowed, and tho no interest is asked for it, yet he who borrows trouble pays dearly for it. An exchange says that some people are so fond of trouble that they can't enjoy honey for thinking of what might have happened if the bee had stung 'em. So it is. These people can not enjoy the sweets of life because it might have been bitter instead of sweet.

**Reaching the Masses.** The question, How to reach the masses? is one discussed at almost every religious convention. Again and again we have called attention to the fact that there is but one way of reaching them and that is to go where they are. You cannot reach a thing unless you get within reach of it. Churches that are content looking after the few and what they are pleased to call the nice people, will never help the masses. The following from the *Western Recorder* is to the point:

The man who in literature or religious teaching aims to reach the highest rather than the mass, seldom finds himself on the way to success. He is a teacher, leader and commander of the people who reach downward rather than upward. When the churches begin to look for nice neighborhoods, for the better class of people, the cultured and the wealthy, they run to leanness and disappointment.

**Divorces.** The ease with which divorces are granted by our courts is one of the alarming state of affairs in these days. By many it is looked upon and treated as nothing more than a civil contract. The sacredness of the marriage relation is entirely overlooked. A correspondent in one of our daily papers says: "Our law recog-

nizes the right of divorce. Why does it not allow the unhappy couples to arrange the terms of their separation as other disagreeing partners do? Men and women do not have to ask the permission of a court and jury to get married. Why should they have to ask it to get unmarried? Why not let people have charge of their own affairs?" Is it really true that men and women do not have to ask the permission of the court or a jury to get married? In most states a license from the court must be secured and without such license it is criminal for any one to perform the marriage ceremony. On the above quotation the *Christian Advocate* makes the following comment:

This man forgets the relationships that are established. A business firm can dissolve, but what of the children resulting from partnership in marriage? What of the transmission of estates? Treat marriage as other civil relations, and the family would be annihilated; society would then degenerate to the lowest level of sensual immorality, which would result in barbarism unless the state, acting upon an ancient speculation, should take charge of all children and educate them in institutional life.

It is true that courts and juries often deal with the questions flippantly, as they do also with other violations of law. Yet the situation is not to be improved by such propositions as these, but by an elevation of the public mind and the restoration of the sacredness of the law. Until this is done, by some means, we must bear the demoralization resulting from the public airing of matrimonial grievances and the abominations of divorce trials.

**Works Both Ways.** Young men of even questionable habits think too much of themselves and their reputation to be seen walking on the street with women who are slightly intoxicated. Why should they expect respectable young ladies to associate with them when at times they are beastly drunk? When our girls once refuse to tolerate in young men what young men will not tolerate in our girls, the standard of morality will be greatly raised.

#### LEADING A PRAYER SERVICE.

A writer in the *Religious Telescope* gives the following very valuable and helpful suggestions as to how to lead a prayer service:

One of the most difficult things in Christian work is to successfully lead a prayer service. "Oh, anybody can lead a prayer meeting," is often heard; but "anybody" cannot do so successfully. I lay no claims to being a model leader, but I have observed some things that I believe are helpful to such a meeting.

1. Everything depends upon the spirit of the worshipers. There must be a happy, joyful, praiseful state of mind. This must grow out of the realization that the worshiper is approaching a benevolent, loving Father—one to be worshiped in the most reverential spirit and manner. I mean by that a going out of the most fervent longing for God and his divine touch and helpfulness, realizing that we can come with all of life and except help and

blessing. Without this all else will be in vain and powerless.

2. In a prayer meeting the leader should present a subject. This unifies the prayers of all, giving a center around which the thoughts of all may be drawn. This usually demands but a small portion of Scripture; not a whole chapter, as many leaders read; sometimes a parable, a miracle, a brief history. Many meetings are injured by too many references. A few related ones are sufficient.

3. The leader should not exhort or preach too long. A few brief, pointed words of explanation or suggestion are far better. He should not exhort or speak too often.

4. Usually persons present should be called upon. This prevents killing pauses and prevents prayer-meeting monopolists from killing time, and helps timid persons to pray in public. However, there should be freedom even in this.

5. If you have a meeting-cooler, use him if possible in the beginning, before the fervor of the meeting, so his influence may not destroy what power there is. Of course, such persons must be used.

6. When one prays audibly let the rest keep silent, except as they may sanction the petition. Do not be afraid of "Amens" in an audible voice. I heard a preacher say once, "There ought to be a dozen of you praying out loud at once." If noise and confusion are power, why not all talk when one gets up to speak? It also is useless to pray at the top of the voice. I know a good brother who prays much more earnestly when some one else prays than when he is called upon to lead. Such conduct is not usually of the Spirit.

7. Crowd two hours into one, rather than one hour into two. One hour is usually long enough—seldom ever more than one and a half hours. *Drive up your chariot.* Remember, meetings are killed by length, and not by strength.

8. Prayer-meetings are not singing schools. Do not sing it to sleep nor to death. Do not drag nor run away. "Sing with the understanding"—that is, with good sense. Sing hymns new and old, fast and slow—always *in time*, always on time.

9. Last and greatest of all is, let the Holy Spirit have unlimited freedom in all that is done.

How hard still it is for men to believe that not what we have suffered, nor what we have done, nor the position we hold among men, nor the office we occupy in the church, will give us any shadow of a title to the kingdom. It comes only by faith in Jesus.